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Bangalore Mirror

TEMP Max 32 | Min 22 | Humidity 70% Thunderstorm with rain Sensex 75,183 | Nifty 23,654 | Gold 1,59,930 | Silver 2,85,000 | Dollar 96.20 | Euro 111.86 | GBP 129.39

CITY / PAGE 5

POLL DANCE

Hectic activity within administration, political parties, as city gets set for civic election more than a decade after the last one

CITY / PAGE 7

UNWANTED INROADS

Temporary bund road constructed at Bellandur Lake causes worry as citizens fear it may not be as temporary as it should be

Doctors say constant changes in shift timings, night schedules that are routine for Bengaluru's IT industry employees make it difficult for many to maintain healthy lifestyles; employees say most workplaces ignore issue as lack of accountability prevails in sector

THE GRIND NEVER STOPS

Burnouts and social withdrawal can affect mental health

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As Bengaluru's IT industry continues to operate around global time zones, rotational shifts and night schedules have become a routine part of work for thousands of employees. But health experts warn that the culture of constantly changing shifts is increasingly affecting the physical and mental well-being of workers in the sector.

Employees working in customer support, cybersecurity monitoring, cloud operations and global delivery teams often alternate between day, evening and overnight shifts every few weeks. While companies rely on these schedules to maintain 24/7 operations for international clients, many workers say the irregular routines leave them exhausted and struggling to maintain healthy lifestyles.

Doctors say the problem begins with the disruption of the body's natural sleep-wake cycle.

"Constantly changing work shifts can have a big effect on the well-being of employees, especially those who are doing night shifts or rotating schedules. The human body kind of runs on a sleep-wake cycle that is natural, and when shifts change again and again, that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8 »

> **"Many IT professionals end up skipping meals, eating at odd intervals, leaning on caffeine too much, sitting in front of screens for extended hours, and not getting enough movement in daily life**
>
> —Dr Sheela Murali Chakravarthy, Internal Medicine specialist

More hazardous by the day

92 new industries came up in 1 year in city that has recorded 2,400 hazardous waste-generating establishments in 2024-25

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Over a period of one year, Bengaluru has added another 92 industries, adding to the city's burgeoning hazardous waste.

According to the Central Pollution Control Board's (CPCB) recent report, Bengaluru (both urban and rural districts combined) in 2024-25 recorded 2,400 hazardous waste-generating industries. In 2023-24, as many as 2,308 such industries existed.

These industries are located in Anekal, Bengaluru East, Bengaluru South, Yelahanka, Bommanahalli, Doddaballapura, Nelamanagala, RR Nagar, Ramanagara, Bengaluru West, Dasarahalli, Mahadevpura, Hoskote, and Peenya.

As per CPCB's report, these industries generate more than 1 lakh tonnes of hazardous waste every year. In 2024-25, the city generated a little over 1.01 lakh tonnes of waste under this category.

Out of these, Anekal produced the highest amount. Of the 1,01,191 tonnes of total waste produced,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Dive into tradition

Author Divya Ramachandran brings the launch of 'Meera and the Magic Kolam', a story that celebrates imagination, tradition and self-expression, along with a two hour interactive kolam session and workshop highlighting heritage and creativity. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: May 24, 2.30 pm**

02 Kick back & relax

Loco Lane transforms match day into a premium fan sanctuary, offering all inclusive IPL screenings with gourmet dining and the comfort of premium box seating for elevated experience. **Where: Loco Lane, Ashok Nagar; When: Until May 31, 5 pm**

03 Lit up

Bangalore Literature Festival presents Dead Write, the city's first genre festival devoted entirely to crime writing, featuring two days of sessions with over twenty acclaimed authors, thrilling plot twists and an immersive murder mystery dinner experience. **Where: Bangalore International Centre, Domlur; When: May 23, 24, 10.30 am onwards**

04 Creativity unleashed

Atta Galatta is hosting an Art Journalling Workshop, a guided, beginner-friendly session where participants can draw, collage, layer and create a journal page that's entirely theirs. **Where: Atta Galatta, Indiranagar; When: May 23, 1 pm**

05 Tune in

Rudraksha Live Entertainment Pvt Ltd presents Jazbaa, a concert featuring Vishal and Rekha Bhardwaj — a powerhouse duo in Indian music and cinema, known for their deeply moving collaborations and individual brilliance. **Where: Phoenix Marketcity; When: May 30, 7 pm**

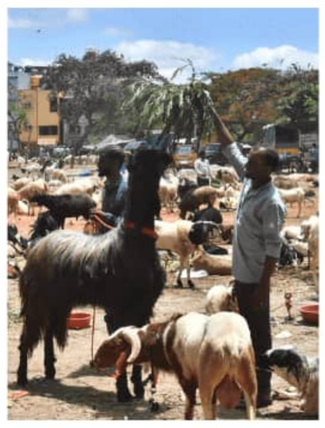
QR code ticketing sees rise in takers across Bengaluru

FILE PHOTO

Nearly 30 per cent of passengers are now purchasing railway tickets through QR codes at railway stations, with usage rising to 29.94 per cent, Divisional Railway Manager Ashutosh Kumar Singh said. Only 11.19 per cent of passengers had used QR-based ticketing in 2024-25. To simplify digital ticketing and improve passenger convenience, the M-UTS Sahayak system was introduced in Bengaluru for the first time in the country, he added. The Bengaluru Division recorded 10.99 crore passengers during the year, marking a 6.05 per cent increase over the previous year. Passenger revenue for 2025-26 stood at Rs 2,428.60 crore, up 9.41 per cent. Freight earnings rose 7.24 per cent to Rs 351.45 crore. Additional revenue included Rs 140.32 crore from parcels, Rs 17.38 crore from catering, Rs 15.75 crore from advertisements and Rs 39.68 crore through ticket checking. Singh also said station maps had been developed through Nammamap.com for major railway stations. — BMB

Buzzing bazaar

Goats and sheep being sold at Eidgah Maidan in Chamarajapete, Bengaluru, ahead of the upcoming Bakrid celebrations



PIC: KAUSHIK JN

Leave the leave on paper only?

Veterinary official suffering from cancer alleges struggle in obtaining government mandated leave for chemotherapy due to administrative hurdles and delays

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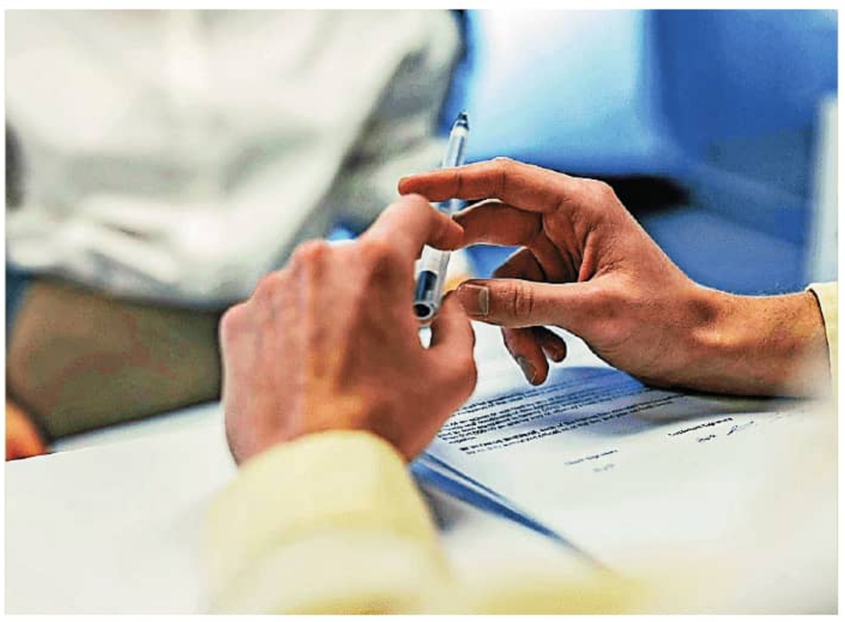

A senior veterinary inspector, Padmaja S Nayak, diagnosed with cancer, has reportedly faced delays in obtaining medical leave despite a government order issued on June 22, 2021. The order, based on a request from the Karnataka State Government Employees Association, authorises six months of medical leave for employees undergoing chemotherapy or radiotherapy. It is alleged that despite the directive, Nayak was required to make repeated appeals to secure the sanctioned leave.

"I submitted the leave application on February 20 to the Chief Veterinary Officer, Veterinary Hospital, Pantharapalya, seeking a six-month leave from January 31, 2026. I submitted the application on February 20 instead of on January 31 as I was undergoing treatment for cancer. The Chief Veterinary Officer wrote a letter to the Deputy Director (Administration) Dr KT Parameshwar on February 25 requesting to sanction the special leave to me but the Deputy Director took his own time till May 4 to allow me to draw salary for only 61 days instead of six months as per the GO issued on June 22, 2021," said Nayak.

She alleged that Dr KT Parameshwar, Deputy Director (Administration), had written a letter to the Chief Veterinary Officer, Pantharapalya Veterinary Hospital, recommending that she be permitted to draw her salary for a period of 61 days. "The Deputy Director, instead of sanctioning six months leave, has not only delayed my salary for February and April but also directed the Chief Veterinary Officer to deduct my earned leave if I failed to submit the medical certificate from the competent authority. I badly needed money as I am undergoing chemotherapy at a private hospital. I want the Deputy Director (Administration) to sanction leave as per the GO and also make arrangements to draw salaries for February and April," she said.

It is also alleged that the authorities failed to do the needful despite Rajajinagar MLA writing a letter to the Commissioner of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences on April 1 advising the sanctioning of the medical leave for Padmaja S Nayak.

When asked about the situation, Chief Veterinary Officer Dr Ravi said that he has already sent the letter to higher authorities for approval. Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Sciences Deputy Director Dr KT Parameshwar stated that he was aware that senior veterinary inspector Padmaja S Nayak had been diagnosed with cancer. "I sent the proposal to the Executive Director, Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust, Arogya Soudha, on May 2 seeking permission to sanction leave for Padmaja S Nayak," said Dr Parameshwar.

It remains unclear why the Deputy Director (Administration) reportedly took nearly three months to act on the leave application, when streamlining of procedures and reducing red tape would benefit employees requiring urgent medical care.

Khata digitisation drive extended to 52 locations

The Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) has announced that the 'My e-Khata is My Right' campaign will continue on May 23 across 52 locations in five city corporations, as part of a 100-day weekly Saturday initiative aimed at streamlining property documentation services and improving access to land records.

The initiative, launched under the guidance of Deputy Chief Minister and Bengaluru Development Minister DK Shivakumar, is focused on safeguarding property ownership records, preventing fraud and ensuring transparent and digital land administration. More than 23 lakh property documents have already been digitised. — BMB

92.25% cumulative result recorded in II PU-2 exams

A cumulative pass percentage of 92.25 per cent was recorded after Examination-2 this year, improving the result achieved earlier in Examination-1.

Announcing the II PU-2 results on Thursday, School Education Minister Madhu Bangarappa said, "The state had already recorded its highest result during Examination-1 and increased the figure again after the second examination. The cumulative result increased by 7.06 per cent compared to last year's 85.19 per cent. The increase follows student-related measures introduced by the government." He said that results across all three streams registered an increase compared to last year's results. — BMB

CRIME FILES

Fake call centre imitating US firm busted

The Karnataka Cyber Command Unit (CCU) busted four fake call centres in Bengaluru that allegedly targeted and cheated US citizens, leading to the arrest of two individuals from Uttar Pradesh and Delhi in the process. Investigations revealed the duo had floated a company named 'Circle Square LLC' and used multiple shell firms to siphon off large sums of money from unsuspecting victims.

The raids were conducted by members of the Special Cyber Cell and Cyber Crime Police Station (South East). They seized 44 SSDs, two mobile phones, two laptops, nine CPUs and prepared scripts.

Officials shared that the fake call centres were impersonating a prominent accounting firm from the USA. They then proceeded to provide counterfeit tax advice, licensing and renewal information while offering fake licence keys and services.

Huge sums of fees were reportedly collected by the suspects for the fake services. Investigation is on to ascertain how these amounts were obtained and through which accounts the funds were transferred out and liquidated. **–BMB**

Man held for theft of two-wheelers

Kengeri police have arrested a man accused of stealing 25 two-wheelers, 12 of which he sold online. In addition, he allegedly stole 12 domestic gas cylinders from various companies, a battery and used an auto rickshaw and a car in the commission of these crimes. The combined value of the property is estimated at Rs 15 lakh.

According to the police complaint, a resident of Kottigepalya had parked his two-wheeler near a petrol pump close to the railway station and left for Mandya. On returning, he found the vehicle missing and later filed a complaint on April 14.

On May 8, police nabbed the accused who was travelling in a vehicle without a number plate on Hemmigepura Main Road. During interrogation, the accused confessed to the crime and further revealed that he had already sold 12 stolen two-wheelers, while the remaining 13 were parked across different parts of the city.

Police recovered the stolen properties and identified 12 theft cases against the accused in Kengeri, Kumbalagodu, RR Nagar, Byatarayanapura, Girinagar, Chandra Layout, Jnanabharathi, CK Achukattu, Bidadi and Keshwapur police stations. The accused was remanded to judicial custody on May 13. **–BMB**

Six arrested for theft of valuables worth Rs 11 lakh

Adugodi Police seized 83 grams of gold jewellery, 400 grams of silver articles and foreign currency worth Rs 48,000, with the total haul valued at Rs 11 lakh. Six persons have been arrested in connection with the case. The investigation began after a resident of Ranga Dasappa Layout reported a break-in, during which thieves stole gold, diamond jewellery and foreign currency from a cupboard at their home.

On April 19, police arrested a woman near Thanamalai Nagar in DJ Halli, leading to the capture of five more suspects, including two women. While in custody, the accused revealed another accomplice, who was subsequently arrested on April 25 near his residence in Kavalbyrasandra.

Officials recovered the stolen gold and silver jewellery along with foreign currency from one of the accused's houses in DJ Halli, and an additional 39 grams of gold jewellery that had been sold to a jewellery shop was recovered on May 4. On May 2, all accused were remanded to judicial custody and two cases in Adugodi and Koramangala police stations were detected against them. **–BMB**

Man found dead in lodge, heart attack suspected

A 38-year-old man from Tamil Nadu was found dead under suspicious circumstances at a private lodge in Bengaluru's Madiwala area, with preliminary investigations pointing towards a heart attack. Police are also searching for the man who had allegedly booked the lodge room and later went missing.

The deceased was identified as Madhu, a native of Puliyampatti in Tamil Nadu. The incident was reported from a lodge in Maruthi Nagar under the limits of the Madiwala Police Station.

According to police, lodge staff discovered Madhu lying unresponsive on a bed and immediately informed the authorities. "A police team rushed to the spot and noticed blood oozing from his mouth," a police officer said.

Officials initially suspected either a drug overdose or a medical complication. However, preliminary medical findings suggest that Madhu, who was reportedly suffering from heart-related ailments and undergoing treatment, may have died due to a heart attack.

Police said Madhu had checked into the lodge on May 18 and is believed to have died on May 19. The incident came to the notice of police only on the morning of May 20.

Police said Madhu had allegedly checked into the lodge using another person's identity. The room had reportedly been booked in the name of Faji Ulla Khan, while Madhu's name was not entered in the lodge register. Police are now trying to trace Khan and determine his role in the case. Further investigation is underway. **–BMB**

Man booked for harassing college student at party

A 20-year-old college student has accused a realtor of molesting her and attempting to rape her during a party, while also alleging that she was later threatened and assaulted by the accused and his associates for approaching the police.

According to an FIR registered at the Madiwala Police Station, the incident took place on May 11 when the student, who studies at a private college and works part-time at an eatery, attended a party hosted by café owners. The accused, identified as Hainas, a native of Kerala and a real-estate broker assisting the owners in selling their business, allegedly assaulted the woman.

Police said the woman's friends returned after hearing her cries and intervened, forcing the accused to flee after allegedly threatening them with dire consequences.

In a video statement, the victim alleged that the accused attempted to rape her and forcibly removed her clothes. The woman further claimed that when she and her friends went to the Madiwala Police Station on May 12 to file a complaint, associates of the accused intimidated them outside the station premises. Two days later, nearly nine men, allegedly led by an associate identified as Suresh, were reportedly seen loitering near her workplace.

On May 15, Suresh and a group of men allegedly barged into the house of her acquaintances and assaulted them, leaving several persons injured. Fearing for her safety, the student later fled to Kerala along with a friend. Police subsequently registered an FIR on May 18 against Hainas and his associates under various sections of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita and have taken up further investigation. **–BMB**

Group held for assaulting man over WhatsApp dispute

A dispute in a gym WhatsApp group allegedly turned violent after a college student and part-time gym trainer was assaulted by a group of men near his residence in North Bengaluru, police said on Thursday. The incident occurred within the limits of the Sanjaynagar Police Station and was captured on CCTV cameras installed in the area.

Police identified the arrested accused as Matin, Shailendra, Pawan, Jayakanth and Shreyas. The victim, Ansh Thakur, is a degree student who also works as a gym trainer.

According to police, Ansh had trained under a private bodybuilding coach, Iliyaz, for nearly two years since 2023. However, the two had reportedly not been in contact for the past six months. On the night of May 18, a heated argument allegedly broke out in a gym WhatsApp group over bodybuilding-related matters and comments concerning the trainer.

During the exchange, Matin allegedly threatened Ansh for speaking against Iliyaz. The next day, Matin and his associates allegedly approached Ansh near his residence on the pretext of meeting him and assaulted him using metal knuckles and other weapons.

CCTV footage reportedly showed the gang arriving on two-wheelers, attacking Ansh and fleeing the spot. Based on a complaint filed by Ansh's family, police registered a case and arrested six persons. Further investigation is underway. **–BMB**

Teen rescued after suicide attempt over family conflict

A 16-year-old girl was rescued following an hour-long operation as she allegedly attempted suicide by climbing onto the fifth floor terrace of an apartment building in NRI Layout under the jurisdiction of the Ramamurthy Nagar Police Station on Thursday.

According to police, the incident is suspected to have been triggered by ongoing family disputes. Officials said the family had approached the police nearly two months ago stating that the girl was frequently leaving home without informing them and would remain untraceable for two to three days at a time. Investigators suspect that repeated arguments and advice and restrictions imposed by the family may have pushed her to take the extreme step.

After receiving an alert through the Namma 112 emergency response service, the Hoysala-50 Ramamurthy Nagar police team rushed to the spot and launched a rescue operation. Police personnel, along with officials from the Karnataka Fire and Emergency Services and members of the public, carefully negotiated with the teenager for nearly an hour before safely rescuing her. She was administered first aid at the spot and later shifted to National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences for counselling and further treatment. Further inquiry is underway. **–BMB**

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Botched pipeline work has left Cleveland high & dry

Water connection was disrupted when sewage pipelines were being laid in area; with no action to restore supply, residents forced to rely on tankers

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Residents of Cleveland locality in Frazer Town have been grappling with prolonged water supply disruption, with many households now dependent on tanker deliveries despite having water connections and cleared bills. The situation, they say, has persisted for weeks, leaving families, especially senior citizens, under severe strain. Residents allege that although pipeline replacement work was carried out and connections were restored, the supply never stabilised. "They were laying pipelines, and initially the water flow was slow. Then even that stopped completely. Now we are fully dependent on tankers," said a resident.

The resident, who has lived in the area for over four decades, said the disruption became a recurring problem linked to earlier infrastructure work. "Six months ago, when they were laying sewage pipelines, our water connection was disrupted. After that, none of us were getting water in Cleveland. Later, we paid for the new line and got it fixed, but the supply has been inconsistent ever since," she said.

Senior citizens face severe hardship managing irregular tanker water deliveries

According to residents, the situation worsened in the last month when water pressure dropped significantly, forcing the community to rely entirely on tanker supply. "We were getting very little water, and now we are completely dependent on tankers. Although we have a new line connection and should get water, we assume BWSSB is not opening the valve connection to our house. It is only done once or twice a week when we get little water, and then it is stopped," the resident added.

Several households raised concerns about elderly residents. "Some senior citizens have health issues and cannot depend on tanker water. We have been repeatedly asking for immediate relief, but there has been no solution so far," said a resident.

The community also alleged that despite multiple written complaints submitted to the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board, little progress has been made in restoring consistent supply. Residents say officials are occupied with other administrative work, delaying intervention. On Wednesday, officials from BWSSB visited the locality following repeated complaints and assured residents that the issue would be resolved soon. However, residents say they are still waiting for action.

> **"Six months ago, when they were laying sewage pipelines, our water connection was disrupted. After that, none of us were getting water**
> – Cleveland resident

"We were told the issue will be fixed, but nothing has changed yet. We are still waiting for something positive," said a resident.

As the situation continues, residents are urging authorities to prioritise a permanent solution over temporary tanker relief, stressing reliable water supply is essential for daily living.

Avalahalli Lake gets long-awaited revival push

Clearing feeder canals remains key to ecological restoration

Green Circle's sustained efforts push authorities to act on desilting, restoration planning, and scientific assessment of lake health

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Following recent coverage by Bangalore Mirror on the deteriorating condition of Avalahalli Lake in Yelahanka, officials have initiated discussions and proposed measures for the lake's restoration, giving residents and environmental activists renewed hope. Members of Green Circle, a citizen-led environmental group actively pursuing the issue, said authorities from the Lakes Division of the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) have shared details of ongoing and proposed works for the lake's development.

V Selvarajan, Chairman of Green Circle, said the group recently held discussions with officials regarding the future of Avalahalli Lake. According to him, the Chief Engineer of the Lakes Division has already ordered desilting works estimated at around Rs 20 lakh. However, the work has currently been halted after covering nearly two acres of the lake area. Officials informed us that soil testing has also been conducted to understand the lake's water-holding capacity so that scientific solutions can be proposed. At present, water percolation is very high, which is why the lake dries up during summer," Selvarajan said.

Another proposal under consideration is the construction of a diversion channel to prevent sewage from entering the lake. According to officials, a proposal worth Rs 20 lakh has already been submitted to the government for approval.

Residents and activists said these developments follow sustained efforts by citizen groups highlighting encroachments and neglect around the lake and its feeder canals.

In a communication with the Deputy Commissioner of Bengaluru Urban district, officials clarified that Avalahalli village falls under Gram Panchayat limits, not GBA jurisdiction, and requested suitable action to clear encroachments affecting the feeder canal. Environmentalists said clearing feeder canal encroachments is crucial for restoring the lake's ecological health and ensuring proper inflow during rains. Green Circle members said they remain hopeful that recent engagement by authorities will translate into long-term restoration measures for the lake.

Spiral island shapes Nagawara's new look

Restoration work at Nagawara Lake is progressing rapidly, with desilting nearing completion and a spiral-shaped island taking shape at the lake's centre. The project, executed under the supervision of the Greater Bengaluru Authority's Project Implementation Unit with support from the National Disaster Mitigation Fund, is expected to be completed by November.

Spread across nearly 89 acres with a storage capacity of 61.31 crore litres, the lake is among the city's key groundwater recharge sources. The Rs 20-crore rejuvenation plan includes desilting, strengthening bunds, restoring wetlands and modernising inlet and outlet drains to reduce monsoon flooding and improve the ecosystem.

Officials said nearly one lakh cubic metres of silt is being removed, while two major wetland zones are being revived to improve natural water flow. Authorities said the focus will remain on groundwater recharge and flood prevention, with only walking tracks planned. More than 11 acres of encroached land have also been reclaimed. — BMB

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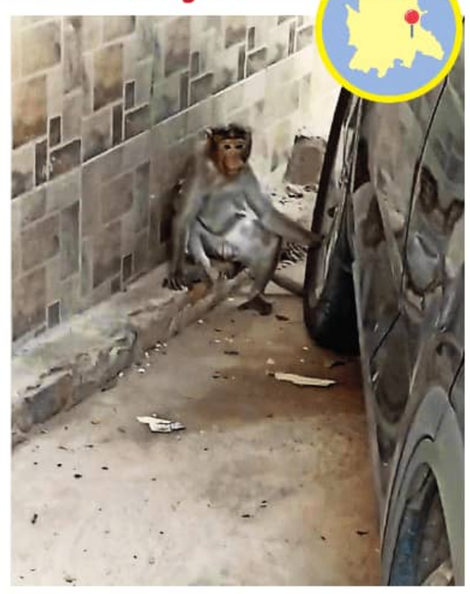
Impact: Swift response

Bilekahalli

Following a reader's report on water dumping in Bilekahalli, local Congress leader B Anthony Kumar and GBA officials acted swiftly to resolve the issue.

Monkey menace

Victoria Layout



Residents of 2nd Cross, Victoria Layout, say monkeys continue to create a nuisance, while the BBMP has failed to act despite repeated complaints.

Drain danger

Majestic

Broken rainwater drains grills beneath the railway bridge near Khodays Circle in Majestic pose a serious safety risk to motorists, especially two-wheeler riders during the monsoon.

JP Nagar's digital change maker

Waste-picker's daughter launches digital help hub, bringing affordable public services and online access directly to underserved slum residents in city

For the first time, a young woman from Bengaluru's waste-picker community has launched a Common Service Centre (CSC), creating easier and more affordable access to digital and government services for hundreds of slum residents in the city.

R Saranya started the Trishul Digital Seva Kendra at Shakambari Nagar in JP Nagar 1st Phase, becoming one of the first people from the waste-picker community to independently run such a centre, with support from Hasiru Dala and Saamuhika Shakti. The initiative is mainly focused on helping waste-picker families and slum residents avail themselves of government services at a low cost, although other Bengaluru residents can also use the services.

Saranya said the idea stemmed from her family background and the struggles she witnessed while accessing government services.

"My mother is currently working as a housekeeper at an NGO, but earlier she worked as a waste picker. I know the difficulties people from our community face while applying for documents and government schemes. So I wanted to start something useful for them," she said.

Centre will help with Aadhaar updates, PAN card applications, voter ID services, caste, income and other certificates, bill payments, mobile recharges and more

The centre will provide services including Aadhaar updates, PAN card applications, voter ID services, income and caste certificates, gas-related certificates, bill payments, mobile recharges, insurance services, online applications, and assistance with government welfare schemes such as PM SVANidhi.

Saranya said she has already begun helping residents obtain important documents. "I have already completed income and gas certificates for some residents. Usually, the process takes around 21 days," she explained.

he added that, before starting the centre, she personally visited the locality and distributed pamphlets among residents to spread awareness about the services available.

"I distributed pamphlets and informed neighbours and residents of Rajeshwari Nagar slum about the centre and its services. Around 450 slum dwellers will benefit from this initiative," she said.

Currently preparing for competitive examinations, Saranya said she is managing both her studies and the CSC centre simultaneously.

"I noticed that many people in my area struggle to access online government services. That motivated me to start this CSC centre. Running the centre helps people and also supports me financially while I continue preparing for exams," she said.

She said NGOs supported her in setting up the centre by providing financial aid, infrastructure and guidance.

The Common Service Centre (CSC), part of the Government of India's Digital India initiative under MeitY, helps people access government documents, welfare schemes, bill payments, banking and other essential digital services, especially in underserved and slum areas.

–BMB

Civic election storm brews across B'luru

SC pressure triggers city's long-delayed civic poll rush as parties, officials and aspirants intensify preparations across the city

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After more than a decade without civic elections, political activity surrounding the city's corporation polls has gathered sudden momentum following the Supreme Court's direction to complete the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) election process by August 31. The deadline has triggered hectic preparations within the administration and among political parties, with ticket aspirants, party workers and officials swinging into action across the city.

A high-level meeting chaired by GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao was held on Wednesday evening with senior civic and election officials to review poll preparedness. Following the transition from the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) to the Greater Bengaluru Authority, the number of wards increased sharply from 198 to 369. Officials have been directed to complete ward boundary demarcation within two months. The government has already divided Bengaluru's 28 Assembly constituencies into five city corporations under the new GBA structure and released a draft reservation list for all 369 wards. Only the final notification remains pending.

Preparations on the ground are already at an advanced stage. Sources said the final voters' list, covering 88.95 lakh voters, has been prepared and categorised by gender. Around 8,023 polling booths have been identified across the 369 wards. The administration has also prepared a list for the appointment of 369 assistant returning officers and 62 election officers, besides identifying strong rooms for storing ballot materials and electronic voting equipment.

Greater Bengaluru Authority headquarters becomes focal point of Bengaluru's accelerated civic poll preparations

Fresh ward equations, intense ticket lobbying and administrative pressure dominate the city's biggest grassroots political exercise in nearly six years

Political parties, meanwhile, have intensified internal discussions, sensing that elections are finally around the corner. Congress and BJP have reportedly held multiple rounds of meetings and begun shortlisting winnable candidates for all 369 wards. Candidate selection, campaign expenditure, local influence and financial backing have become key discussion points in strategy meetings. JD(S), however, is expected to contest only around 120 to 130 wards, according to party leaders.

Smaller parties and regional outfits are also exploring opportunities in select pockets. Sources said that during earlier polls, AIADMK had contested civic elections in the city. Now, the new entrant Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), led by Tamil Nadu actor-politician Vijay, may field candidates in wards with a sizeable Tamil-speaking voter base in Bengaluru. AAP and several other smaller parties have also started preliminary consultations regarding candidates and alliances.

Officials are simultaneously juggling election preparations with the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls ordered by the Election Commission. Concerns remain over the availability of government staff, many of whom are also engaged in census-related work and SSLC and PU examination duties. The state government and the State Election Commission had earlier sought time until September 30 to complete the election process, citing these administrative challenges.

However, a Supreme Court bench headed by Chief Justice Surya Kant, along with Justices Joymalya Bagchi and Vipul Pancholi, extended the deadline only to August 31 from the earlier June 30 cut-off. The court made it clear that no further extension would be granted. Bengaluru's civic body has remained without an elected council since September 2020. Since then, ward restructuring and repeated administrative changes have delayed elections. The ward count was first revised to 243 in 2021, later reduced to 225 in 2023, before the newly formed Greater Bengaluru Authority expanded it to 369 wards under five municipal corporations.

Rishvanjas Rishi Raghavan, Youth Wing Leader of Bengaluru NavaNirmana Party (BNP), said, "For nearly six years, Bengaluru has been denied the most basic layer of democracy: an elected local representative whom citizens can hold accountable. Through the garbage crisis, flooding, broken roads and failing footpaths, we have had no corporator to question. The Supreme Court's extension till August 31 must be the final indulgence. Bengaluru cannot be governed forever by administrators, notifications and excuses. The State Government and Election Commission must treat this as a hard deadline and restore elected local government without further delay."

Vehicles damaged as tree comes crashing

A massive tree collapsed opposite Lakeview Hospital on Kensington Road near Halasuru Lake on Thursday. A few vehicles were damaged, but no casualties were reported in the incident.

The incident occurred at around 9.30 am. A four-wheeler and two two-wheelers were damaged in the mishap. Eyewitnesses said the road was packed with office-goers when the tree collapsed, bringing traffic to a complete halt for nearly three hours as civic workers struggled to clear the fallen tree. It is said that BESCOM teams arrived within minutes to disconnect electricity and prevent electrocution risks, while internet service workers attempted to restore snapped fibre-optic cables hanging across the road. Some injured commuters were initially rushed to Lakeview Hospital for first aid. Surprisingly,

Fallen tree damages vehicles near Hospital Road

the owner of the heavily damaged Mahindra vehicle escaped without major injuries. Witnesses said he appeared more worried about the condition of his car than his own injuries as he walked towards the damaged vehicle after it was moved to safety. The incident has revived concerns over Bengaluru's ageing avenue trees and poor monsoon upkeep, with residents blaming roadworks and root damage for weakening trees.— **Muhammed Ameen**

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Tourism booms, but international visitors not pouring into K'taka

Domestic travellers flock to Karnataka in huge numbers, but foreign tourist growth remains sluggish despite heritage sites and scenic attractions

Sridhar Vivan
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Karnataka, with the tagline 'One State Many Worlds', has emerged as one of India's most preferred destinations for domestic travellers, clocking over 30.45 crore Domestic Tourist Visits (DTVs) in 2024 and ranking third nationally behind Uttar Pradesh (64.68 crore) and Tamil Nadu (30.68 crore). However, in sharp contrast to its strong domestic performance, the state ranks 10th in terms of Foreign Tourist Visits (FTVs), drawing just 4.85 lakh international visitors in the same year. This gap highlights Karnataka's limited penetration into the global tourism market despite its cultural richness, heritage sites and natural diversity.

According to data shared in the Rajya Sabha, Karnataka's domestic tourism journey over the past five years reflects a strong post-pandemic revival. In 2019, the state recorded 22.79 crore domestic tourists. The pandemic hit hard in 2020, causing numbers to crash to 7.74 crore — a staggering 66% drop. However, the state's steady recovery began in 2021 with a modest increase to 8.13 crore visitors, followed by a 124% leap in 2022 to 18.24 crore. In 2023, Karnataka recorded 28.41 crore domestic tourists, and in 2024 it touched a new peak of 30.45 crore — a 7.2% increase over the previous year. The impressive four-year growth of nearly 293% since 2020 positions Karnataka as a tourism powerhouse in India.

In contrast, Karnataka's foreign tourist numbers paint a more subdued picture. From 6.08 lakh FTVs in 2019, the state saw a drastic fall to 1.65 lakh in 2020, followed by a further decline in 2021 to just 72,487 visitors. Although 2022 brought a 77% increase to 1.28 lakh, and 2023 saw a remarkable 218.5% growth to 4.09 lakh, the momentum slowed in 2024 with only an 18.5% rise to 4.85 lakh FTVs. Despite a cumulative 618% growth in foreign tourists since the pandemic low, Karnataka has not yet managed to catch up with top-performing states such as Maharashtra (37.05 lakh FTVs), Tamil Nadu (11.61 lakh), Delhi (19.99 lakh), and even Gujarat and West Bengal, both of which recorded over 20 lakh foreign tourists.

Experts said this divergence in domestic and international rankings reveals a critical gap in Karnataka's tourism strategy. While the state has been highly successful in attracting Indian travellers through its well-connected destinations, nature trails, heritage sites such as Hampi, pilgrimage towns such as Dharmasthala, and urban attractions in Bengaluru, it appears to be underperforming in the global tourism space. "Karnataka lacks the international branding and outreach that states such as Rajasthan, Kerala and Goa have cultivated over decades. The underutilisation of UNESCO sites, limited international flights outside Bengaluru, and insufficient overseas marketing are among the contributing factors," said an expert.

Post-pandemic recovery powers record visitor numbers, but experts flag weak international branding, limited flight connectivity and poor global outreach as major concerns

The state's tourism department has been actively promoting ecotourism, cultural circuits and homestay initiatives to drive local engagement. However, experts believe Karnataka's rich offerings — from ancient temples and historical ruins to coffee estates and pristine beaches — deserve greater global visibility. Tourism planners and stakeholders have suggested expanding air connectivity from hubs such as Mangaluru and Hubballi, aggressively promoting Karnataka at overseas travel fairs, and tapping into niche tourism segments such as wellness, spiritual retreats and adventure tourism for foreign audiences.

In a broader context, Karnataka's 2024 figures place it just behind Andhra Pradesh in domestic tourism, but significantly behind its southern counterparts in foreign footfall. While the state has succeeded in surpassing pre-pandemic domestic numbers and sustaining growth for the fourth consecutive year, the focus must now shift towards closing the gap in international tourism. With the right mix of global campaigns, infrastructure investment and destination branding, Karnataka has the potential not only to rise in the international rankings but also to become a holistic, world-class tourism destination.

Elephant camp warnings ignored again

A 2019 expert committee appointed by the Karnataka High Court had recommended restricting visitors from getting too close to elephants at camps, reducing overcrowding and improving safety measures, but several of its key suggestions remain unimplemented despite repeated incidents. The issue has come back into focus after a tourist was killed and an elephant died during a clash at the Dubare camp in Kodagu. The committee, headed by retired forest officer KM Chinnappa, was formed following a public interest litigation after an elephant died in a fight at the Mathigodu camp in Nagarahole. After inspecting camps across Karnataka, the panel studied infrastructure, veterinary care, animal welfare and visitor movement before submitting its recommendations to the government and the High Court.

Among its suggestions were limiting visitor proximity to elephants, capping the number of elephants in each camp at around 15, creating sub-

camps near major camps, improving veterinary and surgical facilities, preparing scientific diet plans and constructing better shelters modelled on elephant camps in Uttar Pradesh.

Karnataka has 10 elephant camps with 114 elephants, including Dubare, Rampura and Sakrebyle, which activists say remain overcrowded despite new camps being opened after the High Court-backed committee report. Environmental groups criticised the Forest Department for not fully implementing safety and decongestion measures despite repeated elephant-tourist incidents. — BMB

Police delays cripple drug raid operations

Concerns over delays in police assistance during drug raids and inspections have prompted a representation to the Karnataka Director General and Inspector General of Police, seeking urgent statewide directives for better coordination between the police and Drug Control Department. The representation, submitted by Ashokswamy Heroor, President of the Karnataka State Registered Pharmacists Organisation, highlighted operational challenges faced by Drug Control Department officers during raids on illegal medical shops and emergency inspections. The letter stated that Drug Control officers often face hostility during raids, while police insist on written complaints before offering support, causing delays that allow suspects to escape and evidence to vanish. The organisation also claimed many police officers are unaware of the powers held by Drug Control officials. It urged statewide directions to ensure immediate police protection during raids and permit complaints after operations. — BMB

Bengaluru industries generate 1 lakh+ tonnes of hazardous waste every year

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Anekal alone generated nearly 31K tonnes, followed by 20k tonnes produced in Sarjapur, and nearly 10K tonnes in Mahadevpura. City-based solid waste management experts say the amount will increase significantly if domestic hazardous waste is taken into consideration.

"Every household generates a lot of hazardous waste, including paint containers, pesticide containers, etc. Currently, it is being mixed with solid waste and handed over to waste collectors. Hopefully, the new Solid Waste Management (SWM) Rules, 2026, will account for domestic hazardous waste soon," said a solid waste expert.

Notably, the new rule by the central environment ministry has mandated strict four-way segregation at the source and has brought in special care waste as a new category. It includes discarded paint drums, pesticide cans or containers or bottles, compact fluorescent lamp or bulbs, tube lights, expired medicines, broken mercury thermometers, waste batteries, used or waste needles and syringes, and contaminated gauge, or any other waste notified by the Central Pollution Control Board from time to time, generated at the household level.

Karnataka's scenario

The CPCB's recent report on hazardous waste also underlines that Karnataka's share of hazardous waste has grown significantly over the last year. In 2023-24, Karnataka generated 2.32 percent of the total hazardous waste being generated across India. In 2024-25, this share has grown to 3.12 percent. The total hazardous waste generated in the state stood at 5.94 lakh tonnes from 4,280 industries, as compared to 4.3 lakh tonnes in

2023-24 from 4,087 such industries.

This implies an increase of about 6.96% in the number of units, which has led to an increase of 38% in the quantity of hazardous waste generated as compared to the inventory reported in 2023-24. Including opening stock, total waste received from other states, imported, and generated, Karnataka had 9.66 lakh tonnes of hazardous waste. However, only 9.39 lakh tonnes were managed through recycling, scientific disposal, and utilization, leaving more than 27K tonnes of hazardous waste untreated and not managed scientifically. Historical data points to increased hazardous waste generation in Karnataka. In 2020-21, the state produced a little over 2.9 lakh tonnes.

Bund road to trouble

Citizens voice concern over Bellandur Lake's bund road, built for silt transport, fearing its permanence, with misuse in real estate advertising and inadequate official replies adding to issue

Y Maheswara Reddy
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Citizens urge timely completion of lake desilting, transparency in work and removal of temporary bund road once restoration is finished (File photo)

Inspections show no permanent road inside Bellandur Lake; what exists is a temporary bund of desilted material, built to aid restoration works and prevent sewage backflow, says civic volunteer

IN FOCUS
Lake rejuvenation

The temporary bund road constructed at Bellandur Lake by the Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA) has raised concerns among residents of Kempapura and nearby areas. They allege that a builder, in promotional material, claimed the bund road would serve as an access route to a housing project near the lake. Members of the Kempapura Yemalur Bellandur Institution Association (KYBIA) have also questioned the size and width of the road, originally built to transport silt removed from the lake. KYBIA further noted that although desilting began in 2019, there has been little meaningful progress in rejuvenating the lake.

"A temporary bund road originally created for silt transport is being widened and appears to be converted into a permanent structure within the lake and its buffer zone. Dumping of soil, debris and waste inside the lake is leading to the raising of ground levels and permanent alteration of lake morphology. We are also concerned about non-compliance with NGT guidelines and Supreme Court directions, including commitment made through affidavits by authorities. Continued inflow of untreated sewage into the lake due to inadequate diversion and treatment infrastructure is a major issue," said Hari Krishna Paidi Lakshmaiah, trustee of KYBIA.

Notably, on April 17, the BDA Assistant Executive Engineer had issued a notice to the builder directing that the temporary bund road at Bellandur Lake not be featured in project brochures as an access route. "You are directed not to depict the temporary bund road as one of the access roads to your housing project. You are also directed not to use Bellandur Lake photo in the brochure within 15 days of this notice issued. Suitable action will be initiated against you if you fail to comply with this notice," the BDA notice reads.

In response to an RTI query on whether the bund road was permanent and open for public use, the BDA stated that a diversion channel had been constructed to prevent sewage from entering the lake during rejuvenation. While the query sought clarity on the bund road, the reply addressed only the diversion channel. Another query asked about the timeline for removing the bund road after desilting, but the BDA replied that the diversion channel would be removed only after the Bengaluru Water Supply and Sewerage Board (BWSSB) certifies that no sewage or polluted water flows into the lake.

Meanwhile, KYBIA has urged the government to complete desilting within defined timelines, ensure transparency on the quality and quantity of work and remove the temporary bund road once desilting is finished, as originally committed.

Sonali Singh, citizen volunteer, noted that volunteer teams have been directly engaged with the BDA, IISc experts and various stakeholders over several years for the Bellandur Lake rejuvenation efforts. "Based on our understanding and repeated site visits, there appears to be very little merit in the recent allegations being circulated. If any private entity or builder is indeed making misleading claims regarding infrastructure inside the lake, the appropriate authorities should examine and act on it. However, it is unfortunate that such narratives are now beginning to impact and distract from the larger objective of completing Bellandur Lake rejuvenation," said Singh.

She said that citizen stakeholders and resident volunteer groups have undertaken multiple field visits to Bellandur Lake along with BDA engineers and officials. "We have also participated in regular review meetings covering desilting progress, wetland creation, sewage diversion, bund strengthening, monsoon preparedness and silt disposal. Based on these direct inspections and interactions, we have not seen evidence of any permanent road being constructed inside the lake bed. What exists currently is an operational bund created using desilted material to facilitate movement of excavators and trucks, support desilting operations and prevent sewage backflow during monsoon conditions. BDA officials have repeatedly clarified during meetings that this is temporary and linked to ongoing restoration activities," she said.

She added that the volunteers would like to acknowledge the recent efforts by BDA Commissioner Major Manivannan and the engineering team in improving transparency and citizen engagement. "Our appeal to all stakeholders is simple: Let technical facts guide public discourse, let concerns be verified on the ground and let all parties work collaboratively to ensure Bellandur Lake is scientifically and successfully rejuvenated," she said.

IN HIGH COURT

State questioned over pending Gruha Lakshmi payments

The Karnataka High Court has issued notice to the state government over allegations that nearly Rs 5,000 crore meant for clearing pending payments under the Gruha Lakshmi guarantee scheme had not been released to beneficiaries.

A division bench sought a response from the government while hearing a petition questioning the delay in disbursing arrears under the scheme, which provides monthly financial assistance of Rs 2,000 to women heads of households. The petitioners argued that lakhs of beneficiaries across Karnataka had not received payments for several months despite allocations being announced for the welfare programme.

The plea alleged that the State had failed to release the required funds to clear accumulated dues, causing hardship for beneficiaries dependent on the scheme. It also sought directions to ensure timely release of pending instalments and greater transparency in the implementation of the programme.

During the hearing, the High Court took note of the submissions and directed the state government to place its response on record. The matter is expected to be heard further after the government files details regarding fund allocation and the status of payments.

The Gruha Lakshmi scheme is one of the Karnataka government's flagship guarantee programmes launched after the 2023 Assembly elections. Under the initiative, eligible women heads of families receive Rs 2,000 every month through direct benefit transfer. The scheme covers more than one crore beneficiaries across the state. **-BMB**

Gill-Sudharsan masterclass powers Gujarat ahead

A century stand between skipper Shubman Gill and Sai Sudharsan and a fine half-century Jos Buttler helped Gujarat Titans (GT) reach a total of 229/4 in 20 overs against Chennai Super Kings (CSK) at Ahmedabad's Narendra Modi Stadium on Thursday.

CSK need to chase down 230 runs in order to keep their playoff hopes alive.

As GT was put to bat first by CSK, openers Shubman Gill and Sai Sudharsan gave a fine start to their team, looting boundaries against pacers, collecting three fours off Spencer Johnson in the fourth over.

Courtesy of a four straight down the ground by Sudharsan, GT reached the 50-run mark in 5.1 overs.

Gujarat Titans' captain Shubman Gill, left, celebrates his half-century

With a six against Noor Ahmed in the start of the seventh over, Gill completed his 6,000 runs in T20 cricket. The GT skipper ended the over with a six as well, putting up 78 on the board in seven overs. Gill also reached his half-century in just 23 balls, with five fours and three sixes.

Sudharsan joined the party in the ninth over, pumping Anshul Kamboj for a six over deep square leg and then a four down the third man region.

Courtesy of a four by Sudharsan wide of the sweeper cover, GT crossed the 100-run mark in 9.1 overs and Gill-Sudharsan also completed a century stand for the seventh time. At the end of 10 overs, GT was 111/0, with Gill (62*) and Sudharsan (43*) unbeaten. **-ANI**

Today's battle
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Shift systems poorly managed, says IT employees union

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

balance gets messed up," said Dr Sheela Murali Chakravarthy, Director, Internal Medicine, Fortis Hospital.

"In the long run, this disturbance can start to touch both physical health and mental health," she added.

According to health specialists, one of the most immediate effects of rotational shifts is poor sleep quality. Employees working overnight or frequently changing schedules often struggle to get uninterrupted rest during the day, leading to fatigue and reduced concentration.

"When the sleep quality drops, tiredness shows up, concentration goes down, irritability rises, headaches appear and work performance drops too," Dr Chakravarthy explained.

Medical studies on shift workers have linked disrupted sleep cycles with higher levels of stress, anxiety and burnout. "If it keeps going like this for months or years, it can also raise the likelihood of stress, anxiety, high blood pressure, diabetes, extra weight gain and even heart related issues," she said.

Many Bengaluru-based IT employees say rotational schedules also interfere with daily habits. Workers handling overseas client timings often eat meals at irregular hours, spend long periods seated in front of screens and rely heavily on caffeine to stay alert during night shifts. A 28-year old IT worker told Bangalore Mirror that she was unable to build a routine for her life to revolve around, making her consistently agitated. "I don't understand why nobody in the industry acknowledges the issue," she said.

"Shifting schedules also changes everyday habits. Many IT professionals end up skipping meals, eating at odd intervals, leaning on caffeine too much, sitting in front of screens for extended hours, and not getting enough movement in daily life," Dr Chakravarthy said.

"These patterns then spill over into overall health, and also into energy levels, especially when people are trying to cope with irregular timetables," she added.

Mental health concerns are also becoming increasingly common among younger professionals in the industry. "When schedules change constantly, it becomes hard to hold a stable work life balance. Employees might have less time for family and friends, and that can create emotional pressure, burnout, and social withdrawal," Dr. Chakravarthy noted.

"Some younger professionals are even saying they feel stress related symptoms much earlier than previous generations did," she added.

Several employees working in Bengaluru's IT corridor say work-from-home arrangements introduced after the pandemic have further blurred the boundaries between professional and personal life. Without fixed routines, many report extended working hours, irregular sleep patterns and difficulty disconnecting after shifts end.

While rotational work schedules remain essential for companies serving global markets, doctors say organisations and employees must take steps to reduce long-term health risks.

"Though shift based work is pretty normal in IT, both companies and individuals should really aim for healthier routines. Getting enough quality sleep, eating a balanced diet, doing regular exercise, practicing stress management, and keeping up with routine health checkups can all help reduce the long term effects of constantly changing shifts on health," Dr. Chakravarthy said.

Suhas Adiga, General Secretary of the Karnataka State IT/ITeS Employees Union, said the round-the-clock nature of the IT industry has made irregular work schedules a persistent issue for employees. According to him, the sector's dependence on 24-hour operations often results in poorly managed shift systems that take a toll on workers' mental health.

"There is no proper planning," Adiga said, adding that frequent and unpredictable shift changes are among the major reasons many IT employees experience depression and anxiety. He also criticised the lack of adequate oversight of working conditions in the industry, arguing that labour safeguards common in other sectors are often ignored in IT workplaces.

"In other industries, employers are required to provide prior notice before changing shifts, but this is often not followed within the IT industry," he said, urging the state government to introduce stronger regulation and enforcement to protect employees from erratic schedules.

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, GEETA DEVI, Residing at No. 3/33, Flat No. 101, First floor, Achappa Layout, 24th Main extension, Near Mahaveer Riviera, JP Nagar, Bangalore-560078, Have changed my name to GEETA KERAL (W/o Rajendrakumar Kerala) vide affidavit dated 21/05/2026 sworn before Notary Aravind Patil G.G Blore

I, SUBASH N S/o NARAYAN LAL Residing at No. 69-70, 3 CRS, 1 Stage Survey No. 9, Sonnenahall Maruthi Nagara, Ullalu- 560056 have changed my name to SUBHASH N vide affidavit dated: 21/5/2026 Before Notary K.V.Mani Bangalore

I, VIBHA GUPTA, D/o AJAY KUMAR GUPTA, R/o S09-1105, Smondoville, Neo Town Road, Electronic City Phase 1, Bangalore - 560100. I have changed my name to VIBHA BANSAL vide affidavit dated: 21/05/2025 FOR ALL FUTURE PURPOSES.

I, Sharada Raju Shetty W/o, Pradeep Kumar N S R/o Flat No 13 1st Floor Sky Walk Appartment Manjunatha Nagar Ittamadu Bsk 3rd Stage Bengaluru 560085 have changed my name to Sharada R Shetti for all purposes

I, Mirza Hussaini Baig R/o #47,10th Cross Dr AMC Main Road Kushal Nagar KG Halli B'lore-560045 have changed my name to Mirza Hussain Baig

I Arun Prakash Achudhan S/O, Achudhan R/o N0-39, 2nd Cross, Vishweshwariah Enclave, Kammagondanahalli, Bengaluru-560015 have changed my name to Arun Prakash.

I, Suyash Patalbansi, S/o Sunil Patalbansi, R/o 1753, 20th Main Rd, 1st Sector, HSR Layout, Bangalore, Karnataka-560102, changed my name to Suyash Sunil Patalbansi as per affidavit dated 20/05/2026.

I, Dhiraj Kumar Jadhav, Resident, A-302, 4th Floor, Sri Balaji Serene Century, Saras Road, Attur, Bengaluru-560064. Changed my name from Dhiraj Kumar to Dhiraj Kumar Jadhav to all further purposes

I, NILAM SARAWGI W/o Amit Kumar Megotia, R/o No.277, 2nd Cross, 2nd Main Road, RHCS Layout, Annapoorneshwari Nagar, Bengaluru-560091 have changed my name to NILAM MEGOTIA

I, ARPIT MEGOTIA, S/o Amit Kumar Megotia, R/o No.277, 2nd Cross, 2nd Main Road, RHCS Layout, Annapoorneshwari Nagar, Bengaluru -560091 have changed my name to ARPIIT MEGOTIA

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HEALTH TIP: Leafy greens like spinach and kale deliver iron, folate and vitamin K, strengthening bones, boosting immunity and enhancing metabolic function

Regular, moderate pistachio consumption may support heart health, lower cholesterol, improve blood sugar control and enhance gut microbiota

IT'S A NUMBERS GAME

How you map numbers in your mind isn't universal, even among people who read the same language

Imagine taking out a 12-inch ruler and finding that the number 12 is on the left side and the number 1 is on the right side. For most native English speakers, this would be disorienting. We are used to seeing the numbers move from smallest to largest, from left to right. When this layout flips, people struggle because the numbers are now in the "wrong" place, a phenomenon called the SNARC effect – short for Spatial-Numerical Association of Response Codes.

In the lab, researchers like us test this tendency by asking people to press a left or a right button when shown a numerical digit. Native English speakers are generally quicker to press left for small numbers and right for large numbers because these locations match our mental number line.

But here's the twist: What feels like the "correct" direction depends on where you grew up and where you live. In places with right-to-left languages like Arabic, the pattern often flips: People are faster to press right for small numbers and left for large numbers. Speakers of Farsi, a right-to-left language, who were born in Iran but move to France gradually shift toward a left-to-right mapping the longer they stay.

Even literacy matters. On average, people who never learned to read or count don't show the effect at all. Researchers aren't sure why. Maybe these people do not map numbers to space. Or maybe each individual has their own different orientation – left-to-right vs right-to-left – that wash each other out when investigators average them all together.

A key question is the origin of the SNARC effect. Some researchers point to brain lateralisation: the differences in how the left and right sides of the brain are wired and used. Others suggest it is a broader cognitive habit: When people line things up, they prefer to sort them in an order that makes sense for them. For example, if you are comparing 5 inches to 9 inches, you might think of 5 on the left and 9 on the right. But if you were comparing 5 o'clock to 9 o'clock, you might think of 5 on the right and 9 on the left, based on the face of an analog clock.

Do other animals have mental number lines?

Our field of study is comparative cognition. We study how primates and birds make sense of the world: how they think, learn and remember.

We and other researchers in our field started by developing a SNARC task for nonhuman animals. We showed orangutans and gorillas two sets of dots on a touchscreen, one on the left and the other on the right. If these animals naturally associate "less" with left and "more" with right, then on average they should have been more accurate and faster at picking out the smaller set when it appeared on the left than when it appeared on the right. But that is not what happened.

Looking closer at the individuals, we saw why: Some apes showed a left-to-right pattern and others preferred right-to-left. These individual preferences cancelled each other out in our overall averaged results. This split suggested that apes, like humans, do organise magnitudes in space. But without cultural cues like reading or counting direction, each animal developed its own preferred ordering direction.

We and others have since replicated the original study in rhesus monkeys, pigeons and blue jays and our ongoing, not yet peer-reviewed study with chickens. In all of these cases, there's strong evidence for spatial representation of magnitude, along with clear individual differences in direction.

Number-line direction may not be so clear-cut

Finding so much variability in animals made us think: Might individual people also differ more than the averages suggest? Many SNARC studies report only average scores combining all the people tested, making it hard to see whether individual people vary like other animals do.

So we ran a new study in which native English speakers from the United States judged different magnitudes ranging from Arabic numerals to dot quantities and the brightness of a square. The averages showed the expected left-to-right pattern. But individuals often didn't.

Our results suggest that the SNARC effect isn't a universal rule etched into human brains by culture. By looking beyond averages, we see a richer story: Minds can be flexible and inventive, whether they belong to apes, birds or humans.

(Olga Lazareva, Drake University and Reggie Gazes, Bucknell University, The Conversation)

MIRRORLIGHTS

IIT-K researchers study 'relaxed' brain activity to understand how stress impacts cognition

Researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur are studying alpha waves in the brain – typically active when a person is awake and relaxed – to understand how stress affects cognitive functions like attention, working memory and risk-reward analysis.

"The essence of the study is to understand how different people react to stress differently and how stress can have a modulating effect on human cognition," Tushar Sandhan, associate professor of electrical engineering, told PTI.

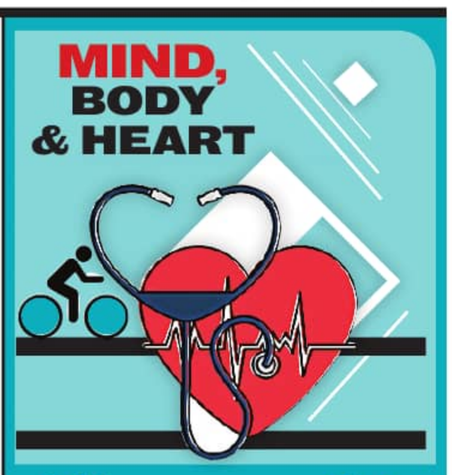
The team aims to use non-invasive measures such as 'electroencephalogram' or EEG to build automated models of varied stress dimensions by correlating with factors, including feeling a loss of control or agency, helplessness and anxiety outlined in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5).

Alpha waves in the brain, discovered about a hundred years ago, are said to be at play when one is in a relaxed wakeful state. They represent a calm, relaxed or meditating mind, typically with eyes closed.

Studies, such as one published in 'Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) Xplore' in October 2025, have explored mitigating stress by exposing a stressed individual to binaural beats in the alpha frequency range of 8-12 Hertz. A binaural beat is an auditory illusion that the brain creates upon listening to slightly differing frequencies delivered to each ear separately.

The result showed a significant rise in alpha wave activity, which corresponded with participants reporting lower perceived stress levels.

IIT-K researchers, led by Sandhan, are investigating the activity of alpha waves in the frontal lobe region, which is crucial for judgement, self-perception and decision-making, using an EEG. —PTI



All you need to know about...

Vacation skin prep

Changes in weather, long flights and sun exposure can quickly undo your routine, often showing up as breakouts, dullness or pigmentation just when you least want it. Dr Aashna Kanchwala, celebrity aesthetic doctor and founder of AcethetiQ Clinic & Wellness, says, "Planning a vacation is one of life's great joys... but in all the excitement, most of us forget the one thing that will show up in every single photograph: our skin." Here's a complete guide as to how to prep your skin before your much deserved holiday.

Start early
One of the biggest mistakes people make is trying to fix their skin just days before travel. "Glowing skin on holiday isn't luck, it's preparation. Start at least two to three weeks before travel and let your skin adjust rather than react," shares Dr Kanchwala.

Build your skin barrier
Healthy skin is seen as resilient skin. "A strong, well-hydrated skin barrier handles everything travel throws at it; sun, sweat, pollution and climate change, far more effectively than depleted skin," she says.

Sunscreen is non-negotiable
If there's one habit to build before your trip, it's sunscreen. "Broad-spectrum SPF 30 or higher, every single day — starting now, not when you land," says Dr Kanchwala.

Choose gentle treatments
If you're looking for that pre-holiday glow, less is more. Treatments like hydrafacials or oxygen facials can enhance radiance without stressing the skin. The focus should be on subtle improvement and not aggressive correction right before travel.

Be well hydrated
Skincare isn't just topical. "In the days before travel, increase your water intake and eat foods rich in antioxidants," advises Dr Kanchwala. —Femina

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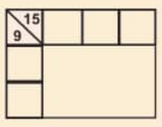
@BangaloreMirror

SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

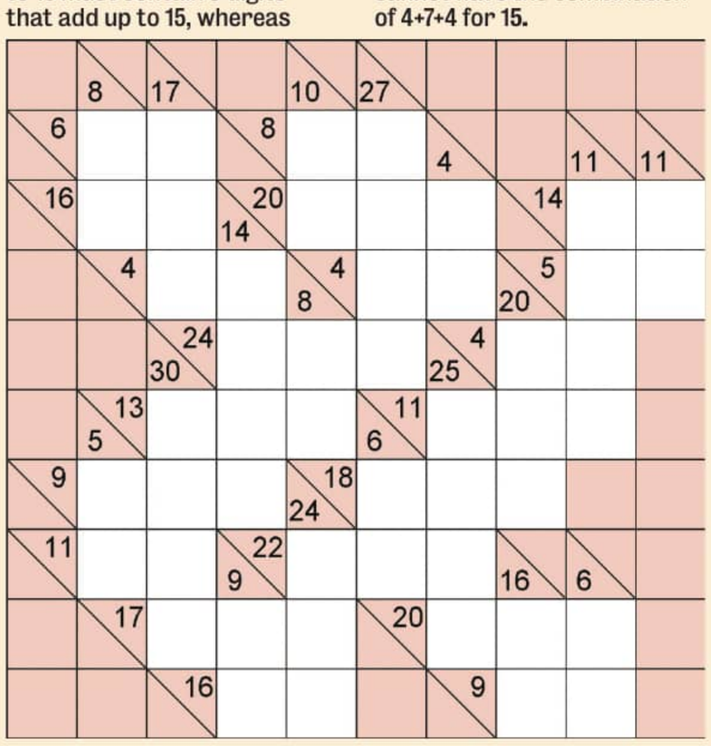
(2^2)^2 - (2^4)^0 - (2^1)^8 - (2^1)^-5 = ?

Kakuro

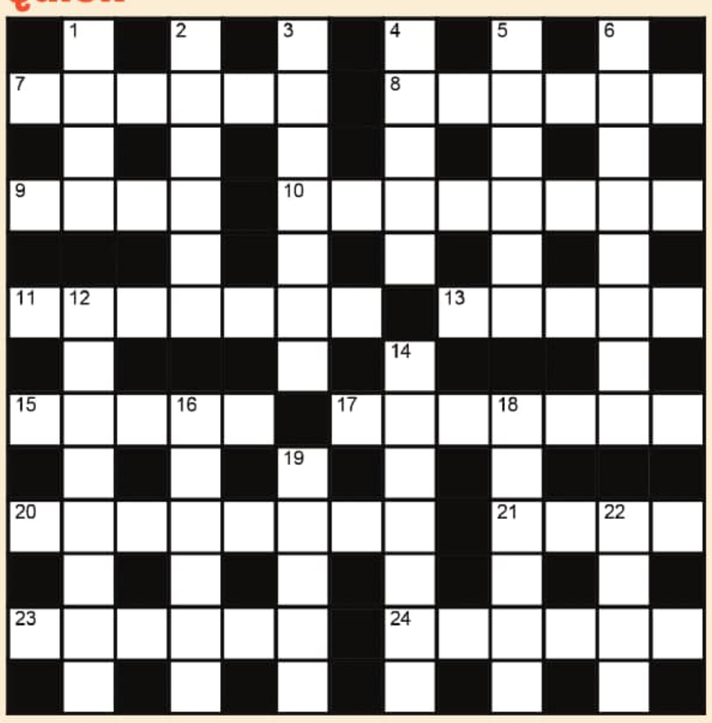
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Size of paper? (6)
8 Karnataka's royal city (6)
9 At the home of, in French (4)
10 Curved sword (8)
11 Used, asked or requested (7)
13 That is to Cato (2,3)
15 Piles, stacks or loads (5)
17 Most just (7)
20 Italian island (8)
21 Carried away (4)
23 Delays or postpones (6)
24 Masked; with one's face covered (6)

DOWN

1 By far (4)
2 South American country (6)
3 Adult male chicken (7)
4 Electronic message (5)
5 Caught sight of (6)
6 Southern US state (8)
12 Readies (8)
14 Language of Maharashtra (7)
16 Priests or monks (6)
18 Squeals or complains about? (4,2)
19 Grind (5)
22 Ended (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: T EQUALS U

XO WLT BCHN NL FCNFS ALIUNSXHQ, KTHHXHQ CONUK XN XAH'N CYBCWA NSU VUAN BCW.

Linemaro

Are you the one? The one I've been looking for

Mindchow

People rarely succeed unless they have fun in what they are doing

Joke of the day

I miss America. I miss crime and murder. I miss Philadelphia. There hasn't been a brutal stabbing or anything here the last 24 hours. I've missed it

Loop

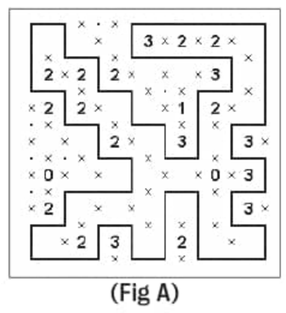
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

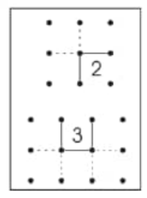
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

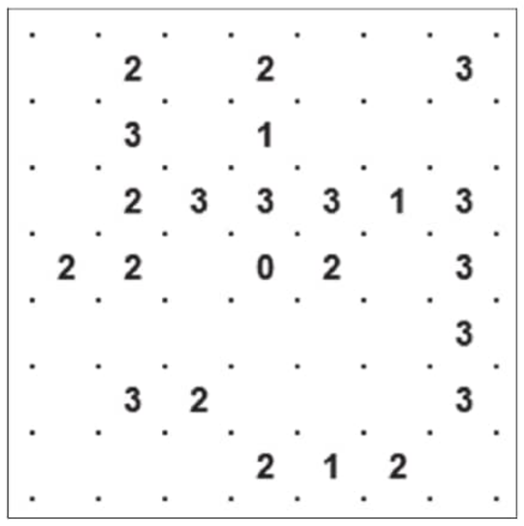
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



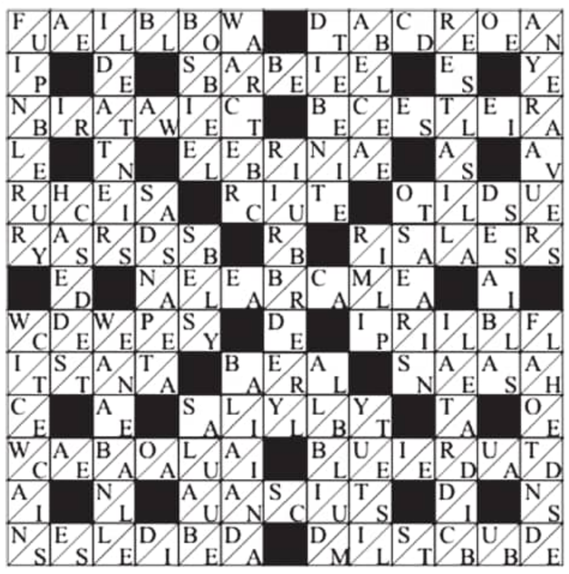
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



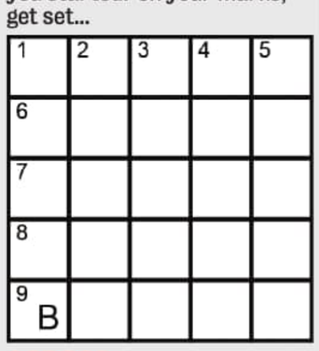
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

1 Leach; 6 Err go; 7 Suave; 8 Neems; 9 Tat by

DOWN

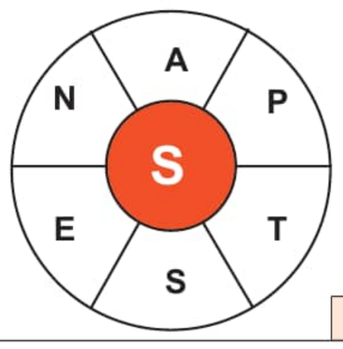
1 Mr Cub; 2 Ova he; 3 Eg set; 4 Lent a; 5 Sayer

Mensapuzzle

Which number is missing from this sequence?

1	3
2	4
2	6
3	5
4	12
4	

Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

17 Average; 19 Good; 21 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

4		6	3					2
			4	7		1		
	5			9				8
							8	6
	4	3		1		2	5	
9	8							
1				4			7	
		9		5	6			
7					9	8		5

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

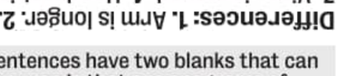
Easy

2 6 7 9

Medium

3 7 7 8

Hard



1 5 5 8

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

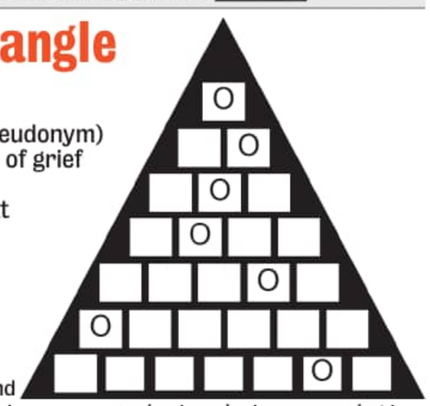
Differences: 1. Arm is longer. 2. Mirror is smaller. 3. Visor is moved. 4. Headrest is smaller. 5. Mouth is different. 6. Top of windshield is lower.

Riddler

The following sentences have two blanks that can be filled with two words that are anagrams of each other. Please find those words. 1. Mark's math _____ was a mild-mannered man. But one thing he would not tolerate was a _____. He would immediately fail anyone caught doing so. 2. The patient _____ his pain through physical therapy. He had seen enough _____ surgeries to know that too many people elected surgery when they shouldn't have. 3. After a long and successful career of serving his country, the nation was in shock as the highly regarded _____ was arrested and tried for _____.

Alpha triangle

1 Circular letter
2 Money Ord.
3 __ de guerre (pseudonym)
4 Prolonged sound of grief
5 Stone worker
6 Men from Muscat
7 Grand house

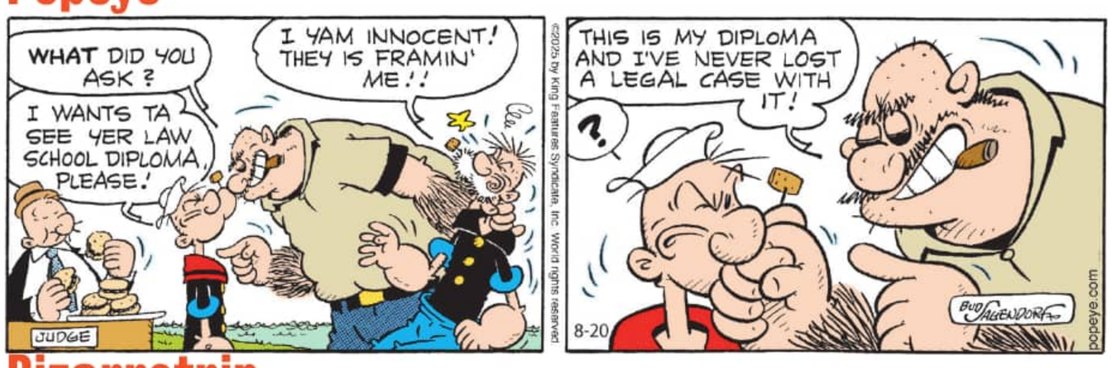


Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS

Popeye

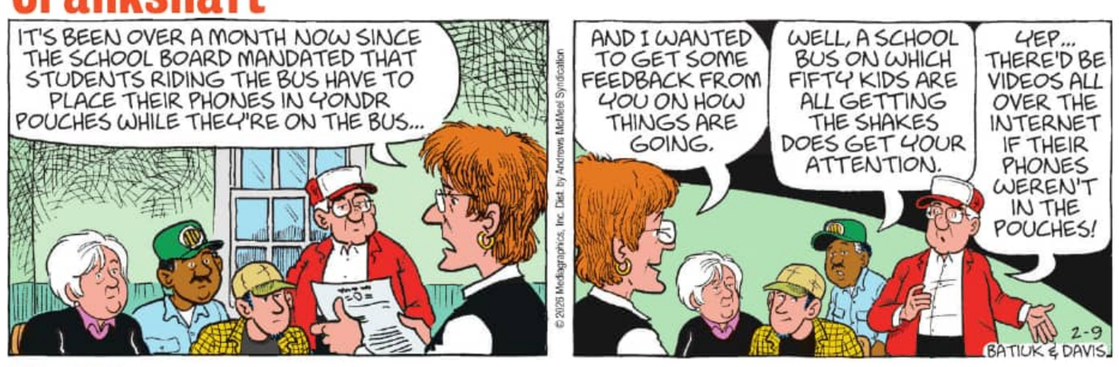


Bizarrotrip

Diamond Lil

Hart of the city

Crankshaft



Mutts

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Loyalty and commitment are your themes. You will find yourself doubling down on the things and people that truly matter. This is a year for "staying power" rather than chasing new trends. Financial stability increases through slow, steady saving. A family member provides an insight that changes your perspective on a childhood memory, bringing a sense of peace.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20

Your physical vitality peaks today, encouraging an outdoor adventure or a challenging workout. Movement clears your mind, allowing a brilliant solution to a domestic problem to finally surface naturally today.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20

A stubborn streak could cause friction in a partnership. Practice the art of compromise today. Yielding a little ground does not mean losing; it means prioritising the health of relationships.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21

Financial news is positive, perhaps involving a bonus or a gift. Use this extra resource wisely. Investing in your education or a new skill will pay dividends in the future.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23

Your intuition is exceptionally sharp today. Trust your gut feelings regarding a new acquaintance. Not everyone earns a place in your inner circle; protect your energy with wisdom and grace.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23

A workplace collaboration requires you to take the lead. Balance your natural authority with empathy to ensure everyone feels heard. Success depends entirely on the collective strength of your team.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23

Travel plans come together smoothly. Whether a short trip or a long journey, the change of scenery will be invigorating. Embrace the unknown with an open heart and curious mind.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22

Focus on shared resources and long-term security. A conversation with a partner about finances brings you closer together. Transparency builds trust, which is the cornerstone of any successful, lasting bond.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22

Intellectual pursuits are favoured. Engage in a deep study of a complex subject. Your mind is sharp and ready to absorb new information. Knowledge is power; use it wisely today.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22

Health and wellness are in focus. Start a new habit that supports your vitality. Small, consistent changes lead to big results. Your future self will thank you for the effort.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20

Romance is in the air. If single, you might meet someone intriguing at a professional event. If partnered, plan a special evening. Connection requires effort, so make it a priority.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19

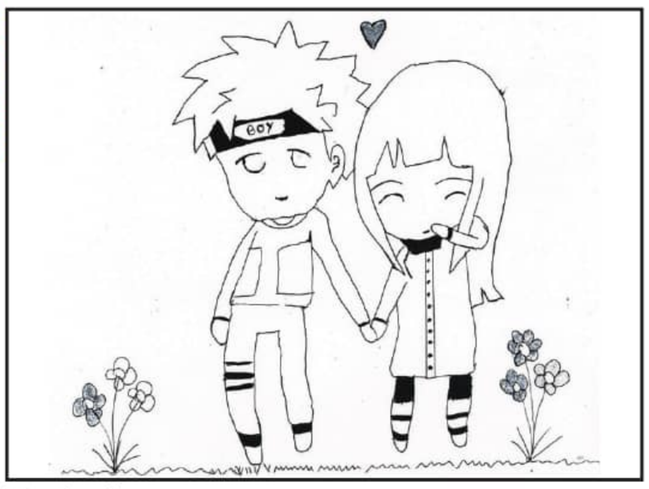
Focus on your home life and family connections. A heartfelt conversation with a parent or child resolves a lingering misunderstanding. Love is the glue that holds your world together today.

Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20

Your creative writing or speaking skills are enhanced. Use this time to work on a poem, story, or presentation. Your words have the power to inspire and move others deeply.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Ullas, Bengaluru

Sanjeev, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

2^4 -2^0 -2^1 -2^1 = 16-1-2-2 = 16-5 =11

RIDDLER

1. teacher, cheater,
2. lessened, needless,
3. Senator, treason

BULL'S EYE

aspen, asset, past, pest, pass, east, nest, pass, sanest, sate, seat, sent, snap, span, spat, spate, spent, step

QUOTE UNCODE

If you want to catch something, running after it isn't always the best way.

FAST FIVE

C	H	E	L	A
R	O	G	E	R
U	V	E	A	S
M	E	S	N	E
B	A	T	T	Y

STRIKE OUT

F	A	L	L	O	W	■	D	A	C	R
I	E	■	B	A	B	E	L	■	E	■
N	I	T	W	I	T	■	B	E	S	T
E	■	T	■	E	E	R	I	E	■	A
R	H	E	A	■	R	U	T	■	T	I
Y	A	R	D	S	■	B	■	I	S	L
D	■	A	L	A	B	A	M	A	■	A
I	S	N	T	■	B	R	A	■	S	A
C	■	A	■	S	L	Y	L	Y	■	T
A	C	A	B	A	L	A	■	B	E	I
A	■	L	■	U	N	C	U	T	■	I
N	E	E	D	E	D	■	M	I	S	C

QUICK

■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE

6. For the first sequence, double the top numbers separately and enter the answer in the third box down, repeat this for the fifth line. For the next sequence add one to each figure on the second row and put the answer on the fourth row, repeating again for the last row.

SUDOKU

7	6	4	1	2	9	8	3	5
8	3	9	7	5	6	4	2	1
1	2	5	8	4	3	6	7	9
9	8	2	5	6	7	3	1	4
6	4	3	9	1	8	2	5	7
5	1	7	2	3	4	9	8	6
3	5	1	6	9	2	7	4	8
2	9	8	4	7	5	1	6	3
4	7	6	3	8	1	5	9	2

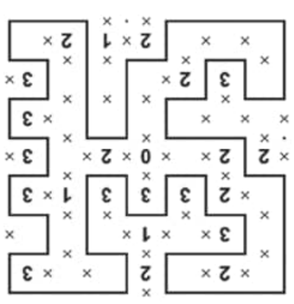
ALPHA TRIANGLE

0, MO, Norn, Moan, Mason, Omanis, Mansion.

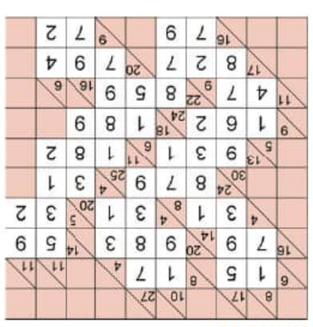
GO FIGURE

Easy
2 + 7 + 6 + 9 = 24
Medium
8 - 3 + 7 - 7 = 5
Hard
5 - 5 - 1 + 8 = 7

LOOP



KAKURO



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Big B's mystery

Amitabh Bachchan's cryptic late-night post leaves fans puzzled, sparking widespread curiosity online

Amitabh Bachchan has once again become the centre of online discussion after sharing a cryptic message on X that left fans confused and curious. The veteran actor posted the message during the early hours of May 21, 2026. Like his earlier posts, the tweet carried his signature numbering style using the letter "T."

His post read, "T 5747 – Bokhla gye log; vichar vyakt kiye – koi samjhein ya na samjhein, liye ke diye ban gye zarur," ("People got flustered and expressed their opinions — whether anyone understood them or not, they definitely ended up getting back what they gave.") he wrote in a post on X. The mysterious wording quickly sparked conversation across social media platforms.

Amitabh Bachchan has remained one of the most active celebrities on social media for several years. The actor regularly shares poems, thoughts, life updates and observations through his X account. His habit of numbering each post with a "T" has become a recognisable feature of his online presence.

The comments section under the post was filled with humorous, poetic and curious reactions from fans. One wrote, "Speak such words that dispel the mind's pride, Cooling others, and yourself too, abide." Another one wrote, "Speak up freely, bro, speak without hesitation, become the symbol of freedom." One more user commented, "There must surely be truth in the thought; panic is its hallmark." Another humorous comment read, "Eat the melody, and you'll know everything (Melody Khao Khud Jan Jao'." On the professional front, Amitabh Bachchan was last seen in Kalki 2898 AD, directed by Nag Ashwin. The film also starred Prabhas, Deepika Padukone and Kamal Haasan in important roles. **—ETimes**

SANDALWOOD SHOTS

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100 days glory

The cast and crew of Kannada movie Maggi Pusthaka celebrated the movie completing 100 days of screening, a rare achievement at a time when most Kannada films are withdrawn within days or weeks. The movie was also successfully screened for 50 days at 10 theatres.

The producer and director felicitated the cast and crew for the milestone. Based on a novel by Avani, the movie is directed by Harivarasanam and has the distinction of being the first children's movie to complete 100 days of screening this year.

"Now, a Kannada movie completing 100 days of screening is considered a miracle. I want to thank director Harivarasanam for his hard work to promote the movie. All the credit must go to the director. Director Harivarasanam said the movie became successful at the box office because of its cast and crew. "I will never forget the cooperation and support of the cast and crew during the shooting and promotional programmes of the movie," the director said.

Veteran character actress Pankaja appreciated the nine producers for supporting the movie. "The director has explained how children use mobile phones. I expect a State Award for this movie as it conveys a good message to society," she said.

Musical dream launch

Veteran actor Ramesh Bhat unveiled Neen Iddare, an album song, at Renukamba Preview Theater on Monday. Norbert, who hails from Mangaluru and resides in Australia, supported the album under the Mogachi Larhran Creation banner. It is directed by Vincent Fernandes Cascia.

Speaking on the occasion, Ramesh Bhat has said producer Norbert calls him as his God Father but he considers the latter as his God Father because of his hospitality. "I have been meeting Norbert whenever I go to Mangaluru for movie shooting. Norbert is known for his hospitality. So, I attended this function despite being busy with shooting of a web series," said Ramesh Bhat.

The album begins with the heroine looking at a bracelet and remembering past events. Its speciality is acting by a mother and daughter. Avil Rodrigues played the hero while Karen Pinto is paired opposite him. According to director Vincent Fernandes Cascia, the original plan was to make one album song, but the team ended up picturising five songs. "We decided to make a movie. The movie is expected to go on floors in a few months," the director said.

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